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DE RUEHKUK #0027 0360640
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P R 050640Z FEB 06
FM REO KIRKUK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0508
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD PRIORITY 0471
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE
RUEHKUK/REO KIRKUK 0534

S E C R E T KIRKUK 000027

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BAGHDAD FOR POLMIL, POL, STRATEFF, ORA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2/5/2016

TAGS: [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [PINS](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: (S) KURDISH IA UNIT SPLITS OVER DEPLOYING OUT OF KIRKUK

CLASSIFIED BY: Scott Dean, Regional Coordinator (Acting), REO
Kirkuk, Department of State.
REASON: 1.4 (a), (b), (d)

11. (S) The 101st tells REO that the MOD ordered the 4th BN, 2nd BDE, 4th Iraqi Army DIV to deploy from Kirkuk outside of Kirkuk province to Bayji. We understand this IA unit is composed of Kurds, but was not a former Peshmerga unit. After the order was given, about half (50%) of the unit deserted, but the rest have deployed to Bayji.

12. (C) Speaker of the Kurdistan National Assembly Adnan Mufti and Deputy Speaker Kamal Kirkuki both raised the matter in separate Feb. 2 meetings with the Regional Coordinator (Acting). They both told RC(A) that the soldiers feared that leaving Kirkuk would leave their families unprotected. That said, they both agreed that Iraqi Army units had to obey MOD orders and said they had so told Kurds.

13. (S) COMMENT: The brigade says some had predicted 80% of the Kurds would desert, so only 50% desertion is good news by Iraqi standards. Some may have returned because of lost pay. We do not rule out that the soldiers might have worried about the security effects on their immediate families if they left Kirkuk. We suspect one major reason is that the Kurds joined the army in preparation for Kirkuk's joining the Kurdistan Regional Government. (KRG Peshmerga units cannot legally establish themselves in Kirkuk.) Fighting insurgents in Arab areas may not have been on these Kurds' personal agenda.

DEAN